



DATE: July 8, 2020

AGENDA ITEM # 3

**TO:** Parks and Recreation Commission

**FROM:** Donna Legge, Recreation & Community Services Director

**SUBJECT:** Grant Park Master Plan

## **RECOMMENDATION**

Receive a report by staff and forward a recommendation to City Council to approve hiring a consultant to complete a Grant Park Master Plan, including a public engagement process

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## **BACKGROUND**

### Parks Plan

The Parks Plan (Plan) was adopted by City Council on May 8, 2012. The purpose of the Plan is to create a clear set of goals, policies, and objectives to provide direction to the City Council and City staff in the development, improvement and enhancement of the City's park system for twenty to thirty years. As a working document, it is intended to evolve over time with ongoing planning efforts and regular updates as unforeseen issues and/or interests arise as the community of Los Altos grows and changes.

The Plan includes an assessment and recommendations for 11 City parks, one trail, one nature preserve and one open space property accounting for approximately 45.45 of developed parkland. This includes Grant Park (Attachment A). The recommendations include:

- Look for opportunities to provide shaded seating through planting of trees
- Complete the Grant Park Renovation CIP which includes replacing lighting, benches, and the pathway
- Complete the Grant Park Jogging Trail CIP

\* The Plan does not address Recreation Facilities.

### Parks and Recreation Commission Capital Improvement Plan Recommendations

During the FY 2020-21 Budget & the five-year (FY 2020-21 to FY 2023-24) Capital Improvement Project process, the Parks and Recreation Commission (PARC) recommended the replacement of the Grant Park playground.

The playground equipment at Grant Park will be at the end of its 15-year expected life span. Pour in Place rubber should be considered as an addition to the playground to increase safety, increase inclusion for children with disabilities, and reduce maintenance costs.

The Grant Park playground renovation is scheduled for consideration in FY 2021-22. Park-in-lieu Funds in the amount of \$350,000 are allocated but require City Council approval.

### City Council Capital Improvement Plan Priorities

At its regular meeting on September 24, 2019, staff facilitated the prioritization of the Capital Improvement Plan with City Council. The following projects are listed as tabulated and approved by Council:

1. Police Department Renovation
2. Annual Pavement Improvement
- 3. Grant Park Community Center**
4. Los Altos Youth Center
5. Parks Renovation
6. City Hall Renovation
7. Garden House Renovation
8. Public Pool Study
9. Halsey House

Staff has identified the following Grant Park Community Center improvements that include, but are not limited to electrical upgrades, efficient heating and cooling system, shade canopies, preschool room features, access to hot water (post COVID-19), storage, parking and consideration of a catering kitchen.

### Bocce Ball Proposal

The Los Altos Legacies representative King Lear spoke during the public comment portion of the Senior Commission meeting on October 7, 2019, proposing to fund the development of two permanent bocce ball courts at Grant Park with a \$20,000 contribution. King also spoke during the public comment portions of the Parks and Recreation Commission meeting on October 16, 2019 and the City Council meeting on October 22, 2019.

During the public comment portion of the Senior Commission meeting on December 2, 2019, King announced that the Rotary Club matched the Legacies' donation of \$20,000, proposing a \$40,000 donation for new bocce ball courts at Grant Park (Attachment B).

Per the current Donation Policy, any contribution made to the City of Los Altos valued to be greater than \$10,000, the matter of acceptance (or not) of the contribution shall be placed upon the agenda of the City Council for its consideration. A letter to the donor(s) shall be sent following the Council's action, informing the person(s) of the Council's decision.

At its regular meeting of December 11, 2019, the PARC recommended that the Senior Commission review the bocce ball proposal and forward a recommendation to the Parks and Recreation Commission at a future meeting.

On January 6, 2020, staff presented an analysis of the proposal, including six optional locations for placement in Grant Park with an estimated cost of \$56,925. This includes public outreach,

Commission and City Council meetings, design, construction, grading, drainage, and a contingency. The estimate was based on the two courts being proposed at the new Los Altos Community Center. Additional costs may be incurred for surveying and soil testing. The estimate does not include shade structures (Attachment C).

Prior to the activities being vacated from the Hillview Community Center in March 2019, there was an average of 56 participants that utilized the two courts on Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday, on an informal, drop-in basis. After Hillview closed and prior to COVID -19, an average of 20 bocce ball participants, each week, utilized available courts at Cuesta Park located in the city of Mountain View – 2.4 miles or a 5-minute drive from Grant Park.

At its regular meeting of March 2, 2020, the Senior Commission recommended that the bocce ball court proposal be included as a part of a greater master plan process to include desired improvements of Grant Park and the Grant Park Community Center.

In recent correspondence with King, the donation amount is now \$50,000.

#### Parks and Recreation Commission Work Plan

At a special meeting on April 22, the PARC approved the FY 2020-21 Work Plan with several projects including a continuation of the following two projects from the previous year, related to playgrounds:

Goal: Aim for high quality parks and facilities

Project: Inclusive Playground Features – Explore additional inclusive features (1 or 2) at each playground.

Project: Outdoor Adult Fitness – Determine placement for inclusive outdoor fitness components and equipment for adults.

## **DISCUSSION**

A regular discussion at the PARC includes what types of amenities would serve the greater population for the least amount of space that is a valuable commodity given the limited acreage (45 acres) the city has available as parkland.

The Hillview Community Center included a City Senior Program and was combined with the Grant Park Senior Program (volunteer-based) when Hillview was closed in March 2019. The Grant Park Community Center is intended to be a shared attraction for the community, to include all ages, interests, and ability levels. The original Grant Park Senior Program that was initiated five years ago, will remain at Grant Park once the new Community Center opens.

In consideration of the various improvements that have been identified for Grant Park and as well as the Grant Park Community Center, staff is recommending that the PARC consider pursuing a Master Plan.

### Definition of a Site Master Plan

The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) is dedicated to the advancement of public parks, recreation and conservation. Its vision is for everyone to have easy access to park and recreation opportunities in sustainable communities. NRPA produces research, education and policy initiatives for members that enrich the communities they serve including Park and Recreation standards for operations and maintenance as well as accreditation and certification.

According to the NRPA publication of “Management of Park and Recreation Agencies,”

A site master plan refers to a drawing that is completed or contemplated, with all the physical modifications shown or proposed. A site master plan shows all the facilities, the vegetation (existing and proposed), circulation routes (roads, paths, trails), service and maintenance areas, parking, playgrounds, and all appropriate accommodations. A preliminary cost estimate will be prepared to see how the planned park documents work within an existing or proposed budget. Community input will help ensure that the plan is comprehensive and fair. This includes an ongoing strategy or process that encourages the residents to contribute suggestions and communicate ideas and concepts. The steps in a design process may vary by designer but generally includes research, inventory, synthesis, preliminary design, final design, implementation, and evaluation.

Based on the number of park and facility amenities that have been identified, and a desire of the community to create a destination in the southern portion of the Los Altos, staff is recommending that the PARC consider forwarding a recommendation to City Council to hire a landscape architect/park planning consultant to prepare a Grant Park Master Plan including a public process. The FY 2020-21 operational park budget includes an allocation for professional consultant services.

Attachments:

- A. Parks Plan Recommendation for Grant Park
- B. Los Altos Legacies and Rotary Donation Letters
- C. Bocce Ball Options and Budget
- D. Grant Park Power Point